



# Department of Justice

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Southern District of Indiana**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **TWENTY INDICTED IN TERRE HAUTE METHAMPHETAMINE TRAFFICKING CASE**

### **PRESS RELEASE**

Timothy M. Morrison, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Indiana, announced the indictment of 20 methamphetamine traffickers, which was unsealed today in U.S. District Court in Terre Haute. Nineteen of the defendants were arrested today and will appear before a United States Magistrate Judge tomorrow morning in Terre Haute. Defendant Jason Bays is still being sought. Law enforcement officers from the region participated in the execution of arrest and search warrants related to the investigation on persons and residences in the Terre Haute area. The indictment was the result of an investigation directed by the Evansville office of the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Vigo County Drug Task Force, and the Indiana State Police. Other law enforcement agencies that participated in the investigation included the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco Firearms and Explosives, the United States Marshal Service, the Clay County Sheriff's Department, and other federal, state and local law enforcement agencies.

A federal grand jury returned three separate indictments in the case, which charge a total of twenty individuals.

The first indictment charged the following eight individuals:

- Robbin Welker, 43, of Terre Haute, Indiana
- Shonna R. Frye, 38, of Terre Haute, Indiana
- Chad Decker, 34, of Terre Haute, Indiana
- Donald A. Myers, 41, of Terre Haute, Indiana
- Jason Bays, 34, of Terre Haute, Indiana
- Rick Dowden, 44, of Terre Haute, Indiana
- Brandon Nemeth, 34, of Terre Haute, Indiana
- Melissa Hutchens, 40, of Terre Haute, Indiana

All eight defendants are charged with conspiracy to distribute methamphetamine. In addition, Welker and Hutchens are charged with separate counts of distribution of methamphetamine. The indictment charges that Welker acquired large amounts of methamphetamine from a source of supply in Indianapolis, Indiana and, with the assistance of Nemeth, transported the methamphetamine to Terre Haute for distribution. It is further alleged that Welker distributed the methamphetamine to several individuals in Terre Haute for redistribution, including Frye, Decker, Myers, Bays, Dowden, and Hutchens.

Federal and state authorities also executed search warrants in conjunction with the execution of the arrest warrants pertaining to the Welker Organization. The locations searched pursuant to federal search warrants include:

- 2700 block of Collett Avenue, Terre Haute
- 2500 block of North 28<sup>th</sup> Street, Terre Haute
- 6000 block of South State Road 63, Terre Haute
- 7200 block of South U.S. Highway 41
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The second indictment charged the following eleven individuals:

- Vicki Shaw, 41, Terre Haute, Indiana
- Frederick L. Douglas, 43, Terre Haute, Indiana
- Jason Shaw, 35, Terre Haute, Indiana
- David Lindsay, 41, West Terre Haute, Indiana
- George Hall, 49, Terre Haute, Indiana
- Dewayne Phelps, 26, Terre Haute, Indiana
- Todd Hathaway, 41, Terre Haute, Indiana
- Jeremiah Corbin, 29, Terre Haute, Indiana
- James Chambers, 40, Terre Haute, Indiana
- Hugh Dean, 29, Hymera, Indiana
- Steve Swayze, 56, Terre Haute, Indiana

All eleven defendants are charged with conspiracy to distribute methamphetamine. The indictment also charges Vicki Shaw with two counts of distribution of methamphetamine, Hall with one count of possession of methamphetamine with intent to distribute, Phelps with one count of possession of methamphetamine with intent to distribute, and Lindsay with one count of possession of methamphetamine with intent to distribute. The indictment charges that Vicki Shaw acquired large amounts of methamphetamine from sources of supply in Indianapolis, Indiana and Arizona. The indictment further alleges that Douglas transported the methamphetamine to Terre Haute, where Vicki Shaw distributed it to her customers for redistribution. The indictment charges that Douglas, Jason Shaw, Lindsay, Hall, Phelps, Hathaway, Corbin, Chambers, Dean, and Swayze distributed methamphetamine in the Terre Haute area for Vicki Shaw.

Federal and state authorities also executed search warrants in conjunction with the execution of the arrest warrants pertaining to the Shaw Organization. The locations searched pursuant to federal search warrants include:

- 1800 block of South 29<sup>th</sup> Street, Terre Haute
- 1400 block of 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Terre Haute
- A garage located in the 1100 block of North 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Terre Haute
- 100 block of South 25<sup>th</sup> Street, Terre Haute
- 600 block of Fort Harrison Road, Terre Haute
- 1200 block of South 18<sup>th</sup> Street, Terre Haute
- 1600 block of South 7<sup>th</sup> Street, Terre Haute
- 10000 block of Flesher Avenue, Terre Haute
- 3100 block of North 26<sup>th</sup> Street, Terre Haute

The third indictment charged Heriberto Malvaiz, 24, of Indianapolis, Indiana with distribution of methamphetamine and possession of a firearm by an illegal alien.

Gary G. Olenkiewicz, Special Agent in Charge, DEA Chicago Field Office said, "The success and safety of this operation is due to the cooperative partnership we have with the Vigo County Drug Task Force, the Indiana State Police, and the other federal and local agencies that assisted with this investigation. We will continue to work with them as well as other federal, state and local agencies to rid our communities of illegal narcotics and the criminals who sell them."

During the execution of search and arrest warrants today, approximately \$28,000 cash was seized, along with approximately 1 1/2 pounds of methamphetamine. Twenty firearms were also seized.

According to Assistant U. S. Attorney Bradley A. Blackington, who is prosecuting the case for the government, most of the defendants, if convicted, face maximum possible prison sentences of life imprisonment.

Initial hearings will begin at 8:30 a.m. tomorrow morning for some of the defendants before a U.S. Magistrate Judge in Terre Haute.

**The indictment is an allegation only, and all defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty at trial or by guilty plea.**

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